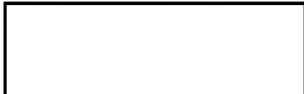


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2. West Germany: German reaction confirms Bonn's continuing sensitivity to US troop reduction in Europe. (Page 4)

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4. Afghanistan: A period of considerable political instability may lie ahead. (Page 6)

5. Notes: Poland; [REDACTED] Iraq. (Page 7)

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West Germany: [The German reaction to the recently announced temporary reduction of US forces in Europe confirms that Bonn continues to be sensitive on this subject.]

[Officials in the West German Foreign Ministry were critical of the lack of prior detailed consultation and said that the announcement at this particular time has had an especially unfavorable psychological effect. They seemed to fear that ultimately the withdrawal of considerably more than 15,000 specialists is involved and that the combat effectiveness of the US forces in Germany may be impaired.]

[The sensitivity exhibited by the government is the prevailing, though not the only, attitude among influential Germans.]

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Afghanistan: Afghanistan may be entering a period of considerable political instability.

Members of the lower house of parliament, which reconvened on 10 April after a three-month recess, have launched a bitter attack on the government's handling of domestic and foreign affairs. Deputies representing the entire political spectrum joined in denouncing Premier Maiwandwal's five-month-old cabinet.

The major attack was aimed at the prime minister's alleged failure to consult parliament. On 11 April, the deputies voted by a large majority to declare "null and void" a recent royal decree appointing the communications minister as minister for parliamentary liaison between the cabinet and the lower house. The deputies maintain that the prime minister alone is responsible for this liaison.

This unprecedented nullification of such a decree is the latest evidence that Afghanistan's first democratically elected parliament intends again to assert its prerogatives. When it initially convened last fall, the deputies' criticism and public demonstrations caused the collapse of the Yusuf government.

Maiwandwal probably will manage to ride out the present storm. However, government efforts to suppress publication of news of the parliamentary criticism may have an adverse effect on the public.

[redacted] former prime minister Daud, whose ouster by the King in 1963 paved the way for political reforms, is gaining popular support, particularly among students reportedly disen-
chanted with the slow pace of Afghan democracy.]

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NOTES

Poland: The regime's decision to hold major observances of the state millenium in competition with the Roman Catholic celebrations of the millenium of Christianity in Poland could result in popular disturbances this weekend. Several regime leaders as well as army units are slated to participate in mass "patriotic" rallies on 16 and 17 April in Poznan and Gniezno, both ancient Polish capitals, where Cardinal Wyszynski and 68 bishops plan to initiate the church's millenium celebrations from 14 to 16 April. The proximity of the two gatherings in an atmosphere emotionally charged by the regime's steps to bar Pope Paul and foreign prelates from the main religious observances in early May could easily spark a demonstration. So far, the regime's carefully executed moves and Wyszynski's relatively temperate stand have combined to keep the Polish public from responding violently to the long church-state struggle.

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*Iraq: The death of President Arif in a plane crash in Iraq last night seems certain to inaugurate a period of prolonged instability. Arif's prestige and skill at political maneuver had enabled him to maintain a precarious balance between rival nationalist groups in Iraq since the overthrow of Qasim in February 1963. Thus his departure will encourage each of these groups to try and seize power for itself. Prime Minister Bazzaz has temporarily assumed office as president, but his prospects for maintaining stability for very long appear slim especially in view of the recent maneuvering between factions within the regime for control of key army positions.

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The Under Secretary of State

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

The Counselor and Chairman of the Policy Planning Council

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